

Exhibit A

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR
THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF ALABAMA
NORTHERN DIVISION**

AMERICAN ALLIANCE FOR EQUAL
RIGHTS, a nonprofit corporation,

Plaintiff,

v.

KAY IVEY, in her official capacity as
Governor of the State of Alabama,

Defendant.

Civil Action No. 2:24-cv-00104-RAH JTA

DECLARATION OF MARCUS BROWN

I, Marcus Brown, hereby declare:

1. I reside in Center Point, Alabama.
2. I am a Licensed Real Estate Broker and have over 20 years of experience in the real estate industry in Alabama.
3. I serve as the Chairman of the Board of Directors for the Alabama Association of Real Estate Brokers ("AAREB"), a trade association and civil rights organization for Black real estate professionals in Alabama.
4. AAREB is the Alabama chapter of the National Association of Real Estate Brokers ("NAREB").
5. Founded in 1947, NAREB is the oldest trade association for Black real estate professionals with a mission of "Democracy in Housing." NAREB was established at a time when Black real estate professionals were wholly excluded from joining other professional organizations due to their race.

6. AAREB has about 200 dues-paying members throughout Alabama and is registered as a 501(c)(6) nonprofit corporation. It has local boards in Birmingham, Mobile, Huntsville, and Montgomery.

7. Although composed principally of Black real estate professionals, the organization embraces all qualified real estate practitioners who are committed to achieving “Democracy in Housing.”

8. As part of its mission, AAREB engages in outreach, education, and advocacy to increase diversity in the profession, close the gap in homeownership and wealth for racial minorities, and dismantle racially discriminatory practices in the real estate industry that have caused devastating harm to Black communities and continue to do so.

9. Members of AAREB learned of this lawsuit through local media coverage in the Alabama Political Reporter.

10. Because AAREB’s members include licensed appraisers, including an individual who currently serves on the Alabama Real Estate Appraisers Board (“Appraisers Board”), the lawsuit immediately piqued our interest.

11. AAREB is involved with education and advocacy efforts related to appraisals, including bias in appraisals and the resulting loss of wealth in Black communities. For example, I sit on an Appraisal Task Force with Alabama fair housing advocates and leaders in the business community. This Appraisal Task Force was assembled due to growing concern about bias in the appraisal process in Alabama. We aim to educate the public about their rights and how to contest appraisals, including by filing complaints with the Appraisers Board.

12. AAREB values and advocates for representation and inclusion on professional, public boards like the Appraisers Board to maintain integrity and oversight. The Appraisers Board

regulates professional appraisers and helps shape practices in the real estate industry.

Homeowners and prospective homebuyers, as well as real estate professionals, benefit from having different perspectives and life experiences on the Appraisers Board, particularly in the context of licensing, investigations, and discipline of members. Greater inclusivity and representation on the Appraisers Board helps to reassure the public that the Appraisers Board will be responsive to their varied needs and concerns.

13. When AAREB learns of a vacancy on the Appraisers Board, or another public board that is of interest, it notifies members of those vacancies and encourages them to apply.

14. In addition, because Black appraisers and other appraisers of color are underrepresented in Alabama and across the country, AAREB has prioritized mentorship and outreach to high schools and colleges, including Historically Black Colleges and Universities. AAREB encourages underrepresented groups to pursue careers in the real estate industry, including as licensed appraisers.


15. AAREB values and advocates for policies – like the two requirements that have been challenged here – to address the legacy of racial discrimination that still impacts Black Alabamians, including real estate professionals and homebuyers.

16. In 2021, AAREB successfully advocated against an effort by the Legislature to remove a seat designated for a Black commissioner on Alabama's Real Estate Commission. Through letters and other advocacy to Governor Ivey and the Legislature's leadership, it advised that the provision was needed to correct for the legacy of racial discrimination in housing and lending in Alabama.

17. Through our work, we know both the history and continued impact of discrimination in all facets of the real estate industry in Alabama, including in licensing and appraisals.

18. Any court order or settlement that finds the two requirements to be unconstitutional or unenforceable will harm AAREB's mission of achieving "Democracy in Housing" and its members' interests.

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed on April 26, 2024.



Marcus Brown